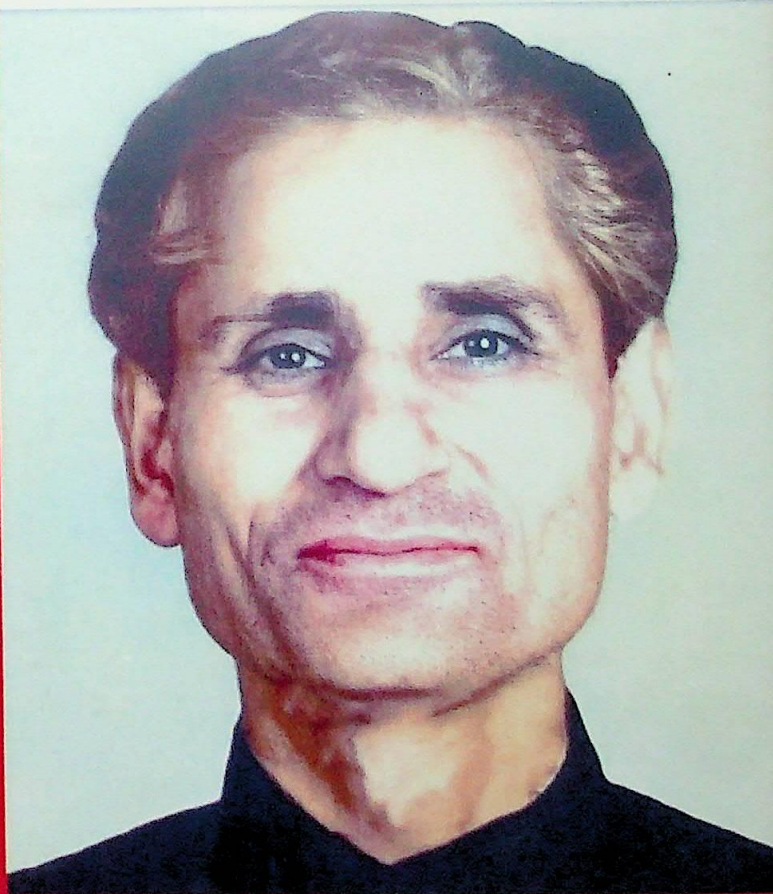




Makers of Indian Literature

Sarvanand Koul Premi

Rattan Lal Shant







Sarvanand Koul Premi

The sculpture reproduced on the endpaper depicts a scene where three soothsayers are interpreting to King Suddhodhana the dream of Queen Maya, mother of Lord Buddha. Below them is seated a scribe recording the interpretation. This is perhaps the earliest available pictorial record of the art of writing in India.

From: Nagarjunakonda, 2nd century A.D.

Courtesy: National Museum, New Delhi

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Rattan Lal Shant

Translated by
Makhan Lal Pandita



SAHITYA AKADEMI

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Sarvanand Koul Premi: Life History

Birth in the house of Mahatma Gopi Nath Koul

Late Sarvanand Koul was martyred in 1990 i.e. 18 years back when he was only 66 years old. He would have been 84 years today if alive. Whatever life he lived, he remained active and energetic in different social, political and literary pursuits. He was keeping good health. Had he been alive he would himself relate the story of his multi pronged life. However, responsible members of his family are our contemporaries and whatever they have made known or whatever Mr. Koul has himself written is available with us and as such there is no space for specific difference of opinion.' This needs to be kept in mind because such a person who has faced good and bad shades of life, many true and untrue stories also move around him.

Pt Sarvanand was born at Soph (which in common mistake is written Sof and this very name i.e. Sof will be used by us in the book), Shali village, on 2nd. November 1924. As per Kashmiri almanac it was Kartik Gatpachh Navam. (Navmi of kartik, the dark half of lunar month). He was second child of his father Gopi Nath Koul. Gopi Nath himself was fifth son of his father. As the mother of Sarvanand Koul died in his child hood (when he was 5 years old), so had Gopi Nath's mother also died after his birth. (1) Gopi Nath's father i.e. Sarvanand's grand father was Pt. Thakur Koul. (2) Gopi Nath married again after the death of his wife and was mostly drawn to devotional worship in place of worldly affairs. However

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his father i.e. Thakur Koul married thrice. Gopi Nath was issue of his second wife and after her death he married again. In all he had eleven sons and daughters.

Sarvanand used to remember his father with reverence, even considered him his mentor. He called him 'Murshidi Kamil' (An Accomplished Guru). We will examine to what extent the life and well reared refinements (sanaskars) of his father made an impact on Sarvanand which was evident in his life and literary pursuits. He has said that his father used to fondle him more than any other child. (3) Gopi Nath excelled his brothers in education as well. He was the first student who passed matriculation not only in his own family, but in his surrounding locality as well. Being well educated for his time he became a government teacher. However he left the job and became a shopkeeper. But his interest for reading, writing and literature remained unchanged. He seemed to be inclined to study of religious (4) scriptures but continued to read other books as well. Sarvanand considered his father to be his inspiration for reading and writing.

United family

The mother of Sarvanand passed away when he was only 5 years old but it was the wonder of the joint family that he did not suffer so much the death of his mother. At that time his family was considered large and well to do in their village where in a day, about 50-60 souls would take their meals. The mother of Sarvanands', Smt. Umra Wati passed away and her young toddlers were brought up by their aunt Gunawati. Gunawati, not only looked after and got Sarvanand educated but to the best of her ability also brought up and educated the other siblings. Sarvanand ji had two brothers, Mahishwar Nath, Narender Nath and two sisters Mugal and Sati. Both sisters passed away maidens,

Mahishwar Nath died after migrating to Jammu in 1990 and Narender ji after establishing himself in Jammu continues to live there..

Sarvanand was brought up by his aunt Gunawati (whom as a mark of love he also called by the name of Guna Wati where as the other members of the family called her 'Tara') like her own child. At one time after his 8th. class he was made to leave the school due to the pressure of the work at home, but Guna wati took a stand and Sarvanand continued his education and completed matriculation. However his (Sarvanand's) own desire and eagerness were also instrumental in it.

As stated above Sarvanand had a deep influence of his father Gopi Nath. He called him the mentor (murshid kaamil) and Mahatma and discussed his qualities and virtues in one of his books. (5) He wrote with honesty 'as to why' he adopted the occupation of a shopkeeper although he had got a job of a Government Teacher. However even as a shopkeeper he never gave up the honesty and truth nor forgot the name of the Almighty while measuring or weighing things. Mahatma Gopi Nath spent most of his time in company of pious persons, sādhus, saints and fakirs. This was a big factor about Sarvanand ji's bent of mind towards the God and he writes 'In our childhood days many godly persons, mahatmas sadhus and saints used to come our home and would stay there for many days....the Muslim pious persons and saints also used to come.....and I got as chance from the very childhood to be in their company and service' (7) Not only this but the quality of not wasting even a fraction of time, he got from his father. He explains, 'He (father) never used to be idle. If he had nothing to do, he would take up a broom and sweep his room or the compound. He would stitch an old dress.'

Had it been in the hands of the son he would not have allowed his father to be a trader although he admired his conducting the job honestly. Gopi Nath ji was not drawn to shopkeeping and trading for nothing. Sarvanand koul's sons viz Rajinder and Ravi have said that among their ancestors who came to Sof (whose correct spelling is Soph but now it is commonly written as Sof), (8) was one Reh Koul, actually a resident of Lari Bal, Bata Gund Krend Gaon, who was also a big iron merchant, and had taken an iron ore mine in Sof on contract basis.(9)

Sarvanand Koul himself has written that his ancestors belonged to Bata Gund (Bijbihara) and had taken up residence at Sof some centuries ago. But he does not make mention of any exemplary progress in their trade, but as per the common psychology of Kashmiri Pandits gave preference to a job and passing days by keeping a low profile. However their dwelling place, from the viewpoint of both affluence and brotherhood was very large in the village. Due to a large family, they had numerous relatives who besides Anantnag were doing excellent job or business in Srinager district as well. Sarvanand, due to his warm affectionate disposition, used to go to them frequently which paid dividends. His ambition of education in a good school got fulfilled. However due to a large joint family there were some impediments as well. These will be discussed next.

Sof village of Premi ji

Sof Shali village was very dear to Sarvanand ji, being a place of natural beauty, and having being born and brought up there. He has penned his feeling about his love of the village in the following couplet.

*Tson andan handye baal shooban qudratakye dewar zan
Lola daryawas bathis pyeth gah chhu travan gaam myon.*

The hills on four sides adorn like natural walls.
On the bank of river of love illumines my village.

Sof is a beautiful place in the lap of hills. In its midst flows river Brangi. In olden times this village was on its bank and another stream Kooril flowed in its midst. This stream would heavily roar in rainy days. The mountains had beautiful plateaus thereon. On one side Ranga Daj and Goorthal and on other Kawne. On other side Headpov, Gutar and Pankhan and on the other side Vetat Bal. All these places were rich in maize fields, almond and apple orchards and numerous kinds of flowers. The younger son of Sarvanand ji, Ravinder Ravi while relating the beauty of the village becomes sentimental and says that 'Sof was truly a paradise'. Sarvanand loved the whole village but 'Sani Dar' the most. He had physical as well as mental attachment with this land. They used the water of the spring below the Sani Dar for drinking purposes and he would go there with the sheep, when after 8th Class domestic responsibility of home fell on his shoulders. It is said that one day he went to that place with the sheep when it rained very heavily giving birth to his poem 'Rooda Jere' Sof has been like common villages the dwelling place of holy souls shrines of Saed Sahebs and historical temples and Tirthas. The name of the village itself points to its historical link..The old Sanskrit name 'Supht Shaleshwar has degenerated into Soph Shali. Now its spelling have changed and is written now Sof, a name of (10) lord Shanker which means 'Shanker lying down in paddy fields'. This temple had old and big stone pillar and two raised platforms (Bader peeths) on which stood two Shiv Lingas. Besides them there were several statues, embossed or engraved

in old Kashmiri style. On the other side is Shrine of Sayd Saheb on the hillock where all the villagers used to take bright light (zool), among whom Sarvanand Koul and his children and family members would be in forefront. On the other side of Sof is Kala Naag where the goddess Kali is installed (In Kashmiri Asthapan: a place where established).

Having natural scenery and religious importance, Sof Shali village was dearer to Sarvanand ji and its impact is vivid in his poetry. However the religious tolerance was at its peak there. Theirs was only one Kashmiri Pandit family who were living hand in glow with majority community. The best example is that on one side of the village was and still is the shrine which is attributed to Shiekhul – Alam. This was called 'Gamaed Haad' The foundation stone of of the shrine was laid by Sarvanand ji in presence of several Muslim pilgrims. Later on , on the occasion of the festival all the inhabitants along with Sarvanand ji would carry a bright light (Zool) to the place. Similarly the local Muslims would also assemble at Soot Shalishwar temple on auspicious occasion of 'Sont Trey on the Kongam Naag (spring) to show their great respect.

Childhood and first companionship

Sarvanand ji got his earlier education from government primary school his village. Fortunately the Head Master of that school was a well known teacher and social advisor Pt. Shiv Jee Raina of Nanil. He loved his students and the people of the surrounding areas still remember him for his helping nature and educational competence. Sarvanand ji has himself expressed many a times that Master Ji, on several occasion, brought him to school or carried him back to his home. Due to this, when he took the admission in the Mission School at Anantnag for further studies, he did not feel in any way deficient. There he took his lodge in the house of a trust

worthy close relative and used to come and go to from his house. From Mission School he passed matriculation through Punjab university and got a good position in the examination.(11) Later on he went to Srinagar and there also lived in the house of a relative till he got his B.A, M.A B.Ed. and honours degrees. Koul family had no dearth of money and could provide their children with education, but it is equally true that taking care, and managing land, cattle, trees and orchards, meant numerous duties at home in the village. This often came in the way of education of school going children. Koul has himself written that a major cause for stop of studies was the joint family. "Due to this", I was destined to undergo many difficulties from the childhood"(12) after eighth class he was under pressure, to leave the school to make himself available to tend sheep. But at that time his aunt Guna Wati stood firm against the elders, and the education of Sarvanand continued. However tending sheep or cattle and sharing domestic chores was the bounden duty of all members of the house.

In childhood, Sarvanand came in contact with two persons who influenced his future life, his thoughts and his literary pursuits. Noteworthy among them was his father Pt. Gopi NathKoul with whom he spent most of the time. Sarvanand ji writes about him, 'I do not know what he saw in me from my very birth that he would feel happy and elated on seeing me and devote special care to me.'(13) It was a peculiar impact in his childhood which he underwent. 'During the days of my childhood, many holy men, Mahatmas, Sadhus and saints would come to our house and would stay there for many days. The religious and holy environment of the house had its influence on me, which deepened with the passage of time. This way I got a chance from very childhood, to be in company and service of holy souls, Sadhus, and Mahatmas.

Sarvanand ji availed the guardianship of his father, but Gopi Nath ji had to bear many odds due to his natural tendency towards spirituality. The source of income was shop-keeping, but he shut it and turned to sadhus and saints. Sarvanand writes about this, 'Although no body at home encouraged him to follow the path of spiritual pursuit, yet he would not leave that difficult path.' (14) Perhaps after noticing this reaction from home (and partly due to his nature) he however never shirk domestic work, and Sarvanand ji being close to him, understood his nature, besides he had the chance to take advantage of 'his valuable words and advice'. He would say this also with great pride that 'There are many examples of his spiritual successes (presently in circulation) which if termed as miracles, (he has himself stressed it as an odious job) it won't be wrong.' (15) His father's maxim, 'Son, never be idle' seems to have been kept by him even in his advanced age, so to say, like an amulet. The personality of his father and his association with other spiritual men, both these influences are the reasons that tilted the balance towards writing devotional songs. This appears to have motivated him towards welfare of others. We will visit this in detail later on.

Next person with whom Sarvanand ji was close and whose impact he himself has acknowledged was Narenjan Nath Shastri. He considers him venerable (fit for worship). Giving his introduction, he says that he was resident of the village Sagam (Brang) 'Not only a known religious scholar but also a level headed and loyal social worker as well.' Serving without any greed he was adept in astrology as well. It is of great importance that, 'From childhood I have spent many precious moments in his company...we had very close relations and we remained friends for about 45 years. Because of that have I learnt intricate points of the Bhagawad Gita and opened the most difficult spiritual knots. He helped me in this

endeavour.'(16)The influence of Narenjan Nath is important from this angle because Bhagawad Gita had such a great impact on Sarvanand ji, that he was only 22 years of age when he started to translate it, and afterwards, at the of 44 he completed its Urdu translation.

These two works clearly show his basic inspiration and attachment, and the importance of Pt. Gopi Nath and Pt Niranjan Nath in shaping his poetic personality.

Marriage and Job

Pt. Sarvanand ji was wedded to Uma ji in marriage when he was 24 years old. Uma ji was born in a nearby village of Sof, named Hangal Gund. Her father was a forester and the family was respected and well off. She was eldest of four siblings and in the house of her spouse, performed the home tasks with dedication, modesty and serenity. Sarvanand ji has himself said. 'Uma ji is actually an inspiration for me'. Their son Sh Rajinder Premi says that 'The marital life of the couple remained harmonious.' But the death of his father for no fault of his and the murder of innocent brother Virender Koul, was a matter of deep distress for the family merely a mention of which made them mournful. Nowhere does Pt. Sarvanand Koul acknowledge that he had to take up a job after his matriculation due to the conditions at home, but we get an indication that although the economic conditions of the home were not bad, it was a common belief that education up to matriculation was enough and subsequent to that it was better to earn some livelihood. This was the reason that at the age of 16-17 he took employment with Khadi Bhandar. Khadi Bhandar is a non profit independent organisation supported by Government of India. It was not run on profit purpose alone. It appears that he found, due to his gentle, nationalistic, nature that the institution was suitable and he worked there

for 8 years.(17) So much so that he joined his postings on transfer to Srinager and outside the valley and he went there happily. He travelled to different districts of Punjab which included Sujan Pur, Jalander, Panpati Aadampur, Kurukshetra and Delhi. He also worked in the Industries Department of Punjab. His father Pt. Gopi Nath was with him at Jalandhar, when the latter passed away on 17 January 1953. Sarvanand ji remembers that day of Panipat with dismay, saying 'He breathed his last while blessing my wife Uma and me.'

Sarvanand had to leave this job and return to Sof, because the younger brother Narendra was to be married and he had written to him that if he would not come home, he would not marry. As no leave was granted to him he had only one option either to resign from the job or go on leave without pay. The leave was not granted, and he left the job and returned home. After passing some days jobless, he came into contact, through a disciple of his father Haji Zagoo Saheb of Nagam, with the Prime Minister Bakhshi Ghulam Mohmmad and was appointed as a teacher. During this period he visited several villages and finally retired as Head Master of Government High School Larnoh carrying out his duties satisfactorily. The presence of Sarvanand Koul during this period in the valley was important in forming his personality. He got higher education, and the spark of literature which was present in him, became a glowing candle.

Premi as a teacher

Pt. Sarvanand Koul was, an able and affectionate teacher for hundreds of his students and an intimate, good friend in social circles in all the places of his posting. Among these places are Bijbihara, Sagam, Kokarnag, Nagam, Dooru, Shopian and Utrasoo. The well known personalities whom he directly or indirectly taught were, Mohmad Maqbool Dar, later Minister for Home Affairs, Ghulam Nabi Aatish poet and scholar, Som Nath Veer poet, scholar and broad caster and a recent Minister

of State Peerzada Mohmad Syed and others. Sarvanand ji was proud of being a teacher and he discharged his duty cheerfully and with compassion. Generally his students would repeat his maxim, 'I am a teacher. Whatever little I know I impart to others. Whatever I do not know I learn from them.'(19) He was a teacher in totality. Untill he led the student to the root of the problem at hand, he would not feel satisfied. He used to say 'To educate is a lasting worship'.(20) Thus he had a belief that knowledge spreads more by the actions of the teacher rather than by reading a book.

It was the thirst for knowledge which made Sarvanand ji carry a book, a pen and a note book in a bag hanging from his shoulder. The writer of this monograph remembers two meetings with him. First while going in a bus from Anantnag to Srinager. En route he not only narrated the Kashmiri translation of some shlokas of Bhagawad Gita, but a ghazal whose couplets he wrote down one by one on the journey, in his note book. The next meeting took place at a bus stand at Anantnag (perhaps it was Oct. 1988) we talked about the reading writing, and and about the literary world!

During travel he must have without exaggeration, received namaskar and salams from about a hundred young boys and even elders. Every one treated him as a teacher and he did not leave any body without enquiring about his welfare.'

His sons Rajinder and Ravi say that he would, often fall asleep while reading a book in his bed. So that, if he woke up, the book would be lying there near his pillow. His private library had thousands of books arranged contentwise on shelves. These books included Gita, and Upanishads, there was among them the holy Quran as well which he would read with all attention and care. It would be proper to say here that when the militant stepped into his room he was sitting under his quilt, reading the book titled 'The Serpent Power'.(21)

Ah Premi

Sarvanand Koul becoming 'Premi' was such an event which has 2-3 reasons behind it. We already know that due to Gopi Nath Koul, the visit of sadhus and saints was frequent to his house. The devotional songs (Bhajan Mandli's) and discourse on Puranas and stories of religious nature were a routine in the house. Sarvanand ji would get a chance off and on to participate in such gatherings so much so that Bhagwat Gita influenced him in his youth. Another reason for this was his employment in Khadi Bhandaar. Khadi was not only a woven fabric or wearing apparel but was a national movement of self sufficiency and nationalism. This movement was patronised by some national leaders and well known social and literary personalities. Sarvanand ji got a chance to interact with them and to listen to their discourse. This way he got a chance on different occasions to meet Mahatma Gandhi, Jawahar Lal Nehru, Maulana Aazad, Mohmad Ali jinnah, Shiekh Abdullah, Bakhshi, Gulam Mohmad, Indira Gandhi, Sanjay and Rajiv Gandhi. He had been to Calcutta and there he met among literary personalities, Rabindra Nath Tagore. Besides him he also met, tall literary personalities like Davinder Satyarthi, Hari Vansh Rai Bachhan, Balraj Sahni, and Sardar Ali Jafri, out of his own interest. The family had lived in an environment of Urdu and Persian, he did Masters in Hindi, and studied continuously books by English authors. For remaining in touch with the rest of the world and could to write in each language. The third reason due to which he turned to poetry and literary research was his forceful participation in literary pursuits.

Sarvanand ji himself has in response to a question from his children, said that he initially wrote under the pen name 'kaula' and would wish for being presented to a literary person for proper instructions.(22) With it in his mind he went to Mehjoor at his place Mitregam who asked in Urdu for his

credentials to which he (Sarvanand) replied in Kashmiri and even narrated something. Mehjoor was pleased and spoke aloud 'Wah Premi'(23) And this became a turning point and Sarvanand Koul became Sarvanand Premi. The other important thing that took place was Premi became disciple of Mehjoor in literary matters besides style of writing. Till then he was mostly writing in Urdu and then onwards turned seriously to writing in Kashmir.

Premi ji's public life was multicoloured not only in respect of reading and writing of literature, but of participating in literary gatherings. This is important because after independence when Cultural Front was formed, he remained connected with it. This appears so because the famous poets and literary people used to come there and to some extent that Premi was himself of progressive thought which can be found in his writings. Naadim Saheb writes in 1958, 'I know Premi the poet in whose heart, human sufferings are nurtured with the spark of love.' (24)

Literary forums and participation in their activities

Reputed poet and member of cultural congress Arjan Dev Majboor writes about the social and literary life of Premi, 'Premi used to reach first of all in every cultural and literary gathering. This cheerful poet was known to me since 1949... Both of us lived together in a lodge for a month at Badyar Balla. It must have been in 1952. He was in the forefront of the freedom movement. Khadi clothes comprising kurta shirt and jacket of green colour.... Humanism was his religion.'(25) He did not remain confined to the cultural front and cultural congress only, but participated in local literary forums also. Late Qazi Nissar had opened a big educational institution in Anantnag, the honorary membership of which was given to Premi ji. Similarly Sarvanand taught for some time in school of Nasratul Islam at Anantnag. Besides, there was a well

known school at Nagbal Anantnag where he worked as a teacher.

Among autonomous literary forums, Premi ji was connected with Nag Rad Adbi Front, and Brang Bazm Adab. In social and religious institutions he was closely associated with Alakhy Shwari trust Srinagar and wrote a booklet on Rupa Bhawani (Rupa Ded). In 1956, when historical meetings of Jashni- Kashmir were held in the valley, Premi ji participated as an active member and dynamic worker. Sarvanand koul Premi was a member of Public Accounts committee of Radio Kashmir which indicates the sort of a respect he enjoyed in social circles and literary forums.

Sofi Premi

It was Premi ji's extended public rapport that despite being the single minority house in the village, he enjoyed a prominent place in the personal life of neighbours and friends. He was considered, a learned person, a well wisher, and good councillor of the mohalla. As ill luck would have it, his impartial beliefs did not help him and he was martyred, though he believed till his last breath that he would not be harmed because he had not harmed any body.(26) He was well read person and always had an unquenchable thirst for knowledge. By nature he was simple, and rustic, and envied none. During the days of 1989 and 1990 when members of the minority community were passing days in fear, no body heard the voice of Premi using resentful or envious language. But as a poet, his tears rolled down in silence... But he had complete faith and trust in Kashmiri thinking and way of life and if any body would exhort him to leave Kashmir he would respond with anger.... He fully believed in oneness of God, and in multiple ways to reach him as ordained in the Upanishad... One of our co-journalists, Mohmad Yusuf Qadri often conversed with Premi.

He was very much impressed by Premi ji's vision and far-sightedness and sometimes called him a 'Sofi Premi'(27)..... meaning thereby a resident of Sof village, with Sofi bent of mind. One day he was asked in a literary gathering, "Do you believe that your poetry of peace and tranquillity will have any impact of improving the present environment? He replied, 'It is enough if only five persons get convinced and influenced. The legacy of Lal Ded and Nund Rishi is too strong in Kashmir to be easily broken' He would cite the example of his own house which was single minority house in the village and he remained performing his daily routine till his last days, which also included attendance at the shrine of Baba Nasib-Udin Gazi. Those who have a glance at the life of Premi ji, are shocked that he became a victim of bigotry.

Living by Ideals

In 1989 when conditions began to deteriorate and political personalities of different ideologies, and especially the celebrities of the minority community, were being hunted, the whole community was forced to leave Kashmir. Sarvanand Koul was told by many Kashmiri Pandits, Muslim friends and well wishers to leave the village. Premi ji relied up on his Idealism. His own family members also warned him of things worsening, but he would say 'To leave one's own birth place is a sin.' He would even rebuff them for saying this, as he had faith that many of his students and friends and others would definitely save and protect him.(28)

Masha Allah this is the Holy Quran

But that did not happen. Fanaticism and fundamentalism became the order of the day and the secular traditions of Kashmir developed a crack. Sarvanand Koul Premi was kidnapped from his home on 29th. April 1990. There was no

word about him for two days and finally a message about his murder reached his home. When his sons Rajinder and Virander, were at home. Rajinder says(29) that there was a knock on the door at 9 PM and three masked young men stepped into their house. All the members of the house were directed to assemble in one room and the house was searched both in the upper and lower floors. The cash, ornaments and costly apparels were put into a bag. The women folk were asked to remove all jewellery. During the search of Premi's room and books, the Holy Quran tumbled down from the shelf. On seeing it they were bewildered and one of them spoke loudly. 'Ma Sha Allah it is Quran Sheriff'(30) While leaving they took Premi with them with a word to his family about setting him free after a talk with the commander. The middle son Virender, who resisted, was also taken along. After two days i.e. on 1-5-1990 the dead bodies of both the father and son were seen hanging from trees. It was evident that they had been killed cruelly and brutally. The hands and legs had been broken, the eyes gouged out and the forehead where Premi ji used to apply Tika mark incised.(31) His assassination plunged the whole village into silent mourning and many official and semi official reporters gave the news to newspapers. Some investigative reporters came to their home and for a day or two the news of Premi ji's merciless murder continued appearing in local news papers and Urdu, Hindi and English news papers of Punjab and Delhi. Some political organisations gave statements according to their thinking and to derive their political mileage and made reports. Among them was only the report of 'Asia Watch(32) institution' which said that Premi was kidnapped by security forces and killed. It has treated the statement of Premi ji's family members as evidence in their report. Contrary to it, the statements of Rajinder and Ravi that no one from the organisation came to them till date, nor did any member of the family give such a statement

anywhere so far.(33) When they migrated to Jammu the matter came into lime light, and their village house was set on fire. The third son of Premi ji, Ravinder had been appointed in All India Radio in Kashmiri news section a month before this tragic happening. As Ravi ji's ill luck would have it, it fell upon him to first broadcast from All India Radio in the news bulletin of 1-5-1990 at 7.45 AM, about the murder of Premi ji, his father.

He was an massager of love

Sh. Reshi Dev writer, wrote about the merciless murder of Sarvanand Koul in his book titled 'Zahkmoo ki Zabani' he wrote 'His only fault was that he had loved and embraced Kashmiri language and Kashmiriyat from the core of his heart.(34) Mr. Daanish wrote in Rozenama Quomi Aawaz 'Those intellectuals who from technical point of view launch typecast pictures, and pound their chests in the cultural market, who stole their freedom of expression, they could not see this tragic event.(35) Kashmir Times wrote in editorial 'If the members of a particular community are soft target for the militants, why are those at the helm of affairs not told to take steps to ensure their safety?.'(36) The daily Indian Express wrote, "Premi was respected by all the communities for his secular and progressive views and he was a famous Kashmiri poet.'(37) The State Government proclaimed him a courageous freedom fighter and a poet, and after his death he was rewarded a gold medal and Rs. one lakh posthumously. In addition, many non official organisations and institutions pronounced him a martyr and elaborated on his impartial character in detail. He was given honours of Shri Bhat and Sharda Award.

Expressing their sorrow on the murder of innocent Sarvanand Koul, those who paid their tributes were Mohmad

Shaffi Qureshi Ex-Governor who declared him a proud son of Kashmir, Dr. Karan Singh Ex Sadar-i-Ryasat Jammu and Kashmir who considered his murder a revolution offering in Kashmir. T.N. Koul EX-Ambassador said that the saboteurs were annoyed due to his firm belief in accession of the state to India, Syed Shahabudin who termed him a worker of culture and freedom fighter and Ex-Ambassador L.M. Singhvi who considered him an important poet and writer. Ex-Governor Jag Mohan wrote in his book Frozen 'Turbulence in Kashmir' that at the time of his kidnapping, some of his Muslim neighbours came in his defence but in vain Premi was a poet who was a messenger of love and revolutionary guard of truth and justice.(38)

Notes

1. Mahatma Gopi Nath Koul p. 1 (from Sarvanand Koul Premi
2. - do -
3. - do - p no.
4. - do - p. 3
5. - do - p. 1 Title
6. - do - p. 2
7. - do-
8. See p. 5 of the book where Sof has been explained.
9. There were iron ore mines in Sof. Their remains are still existing.
10. The actual word is Bhagwan but in Kashmiri it is Bagwan. Bhagwan word has no absolute meaning. The word meaning is owner, affluent & capable. But this is in common parlance ascribed to an elderly venerable person. Bhagwati is its feminine.

11. Kutchh apni baat Premi, included in Urdu translation of Bhagwat Gita (print 1992)
12. - do - p. 2
13. Mahatma Gopi Nath Koul :Premi
14. - do -
15. - do -
16. Kutch apni baat p. 2
17. After taking up the job of Khadi Bhandar, Premi ji took an active part in politics. In 1942 he worked under ground for the movement of 'Bharat Chhodo'. During 1946-47 he was arrested six times. He always remained associated with national politics, so much so that he would meet national leaders outside Kashmir and when he came back in 1954 he again remained occupied with the politics.
18. Mahatma Gopi Nath Koul- p. 5.
19. From the questionnaire : It was presented to the children of Premi ji by the author of this book and they gave reasonable replies.
20. - do - p. 16
21. - do - p. 17
22. - do - p. 11
23. - do - p. 11
24. Premi ji who is living for ever (immortal)-Arjan Dev Majboor (p. 1 Kasshur Samachar) .
25. - do -
26. - do - p. 2
27. Shyam Koul -Sarvanand Premi A remembrance p. 2
28. It is equal to treachery- Sarvanand Koul Premi. A secular Poet
29. Questionnaire p. 24
30. - do -
31. Dr. R.L.Bhat – Sarvanand Koul Premi still unsung.
32. Kashmir under siege May 1991.

33. Rajinder Premi told the writer of these letters. Amar Shahid Sarvnand Koul – A profile by Rajinder Premi.
34. p. 119
35. Qomi Awaz 11-9-99
36. Kashmir Times 9-5-90
37. 3-5-90
38. Jag Mohan, My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir, p. 488

Sarvanand Koul Premi: His Poetry

In tune with the times – a poet of diversities

As we search for the writings of Sarvanand Koul Premi we are disappointed that most of his writings whether printed or otherwise are not available. As he himself has made a mention of his books from time to time, in writings, verbally to his children, friends and contemporary writers, that gives an indication that he was a writer of sorts and a prolific poet. Not only this he had knowledge of not less than four languages and had good command over them. He was fond of reading not only Kashmiri books but also books in other languages which inspired him to write. Reading books of repute and getting influenced to write down one's own experience is found in many writers. However this influence can be of two kinds. Either the writer will imitate or some parallel thought or a feeling will dawn upon him. No doubt we find such thoughts and emotions in abundance in Prem ji and we find his own happenings hidden therein. The other thing which must be kept in view is that he was an extremely emotional poet and had complete faith in upholding conscientiously the connections with his times and the place where he lived. He not only felt but made others aware of his feelings. Perhaps this is one reason for his manifold writings. He would pick up the pen and go on writing without language becoming an impediment. The list of his writings is being ascertained, though much of it is not available now. As he became a victim of terrorism and as his family fled from the valley, perhaps this was

inevitable. From the writings available to us at present we can make a guess about his other writings

However list of Premi's writings is given below :

Published books/booklets

Kashmiri

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Kalam Premi | Poetry |
| 1. Payam Premi | |
| 2. Rood Jer ta Taj | |
| 3. Aosh ta vosh | |
| 4. Paan tsadar | |
| 5. Bakhti kosum | |
| 6. Gitanjali | Translation |
| 7. Mirza Kak (vakh) | |
| 8. Roosi Padshah katha | (Second time described) |

Urdu

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------|
| 9. Mirza Kak | (biography) |
| 10. Ropa Bhawani | - do- |
| 11. Kashmir ki beda nidra | poem |
| 12. Bhagwat Gita | Translation |

Hindi

- | | |
|------------------|--------------|
| 13. Mathra Devi | (biography) |
| 14. Ropa Bhawani | -do- |
| 15. Taj | poetry |

Books/ booklets not printed as yet.

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------|
| 1. Ramayan | poetry |
| 2. Wakh hay Premi | |
| 3. Aradhana | |
| 4. Aalath | |
| 5. Myane Madu Shala | |
| 6. Bhagwat Gita | Translation |

7. Pushkin sanz nazma - do -
8. Kenh Dharmik Kathayi (Described secondtime)

Urdu

9. Laleshwari biography
- 9A. Hamara Mehjoor - do -

English

10. My holy father
11. Tears of Love and Joy
12. Spiritual doses
13. Utterances of Premi
14. Mirza Kak ji

Hindi

15. Parmarth Shatak

As has been said before there are only few books out of the lot available with us .Out of the printed books , the writer of this monograph has been able to lay hand on few after great efforts which came to fruition only with the admirable help of the sons of Premi ji. Only following books were available.

Poetry (Kashmiri)

1. Aosh ta voash
2. Paan Tsadar Poetry (Urdu)

Poetry Urdu

3. Kashmiri ki Beti

Translation (Kashmiri)

4. Gitanjali
5. Bhagwat Gita (6 chapters)

Translation

Translation Urdu

6. Bhagawad Gita (complete)

Biography(Hindi)

7. Mathra Devi - do -
8. Mirza Kak

Besides theses I have found some unpublished manuscripts of some books.

Poetry (Kashmiri)

1. Ramayan
2. Aalath
3. Myane Madu Shala

Biography (Urdu)

4. Laleshwari.

It follows that my study of Premi is confined to these books. However this study will help us to know his creative personality. One quality after looking at these literary works that attracts our attention is that as he was trying his pen on various literary genres, the language was not a barrier for him. He would write fearlessly in the language of his choice which suited his perception of the topic. Secondly it appears that he had always been a poet devoted to reading and writing. Although from an appraisal of his life, he appears, besides his literary activities, connected with social, cultural, and political activities, and along with all that, would snatch time for literary work as well.

Nearer Mehjoor Saheb

Tears and sigh (Aosh ta Wosh) was published in 1958 or 1959 and prior to that Premi's three books appear in the list. Those

are Premi's Poetry (Kalami Premi), message of Premi's poetry (Pyami Premi) and 'Rood Jarye' (torrential rain). 'Rood Jerye' is a poem in the book of 'Pan Tsadar' (cascade) included in it in 1982. I do not think, that the poet published a book of this title in the fifth or sixth decade, he would take from that book a prominent poem (bearing the name of the book) and include it in the book titled 'Pan Tsader.' My guess is that this poem must have been written some time before and preserved in the shape of a pamphlet which was given a separate name of a book, while making out a list. It was Premi ji's habit as well. He would write in beautiful alphabets and then preserve it in a proper cover. 'Aalath' 'Myanye Madu Shala' and 'Ramayan' manuscripts were well preserved by him in book shape, although these are only manuscripts. By this assessment two books of Prem ji prior 'Aosh ta Woash' appear to have been published, which must have been brought out from 1943 to 1949-52. 'Aosh' is agreed to have been published in 1958 as per the foreword written by Dina Nath Nadim which is dated 29-Dec. 1958. After writing the foreword, the book must have appeared after some time. Nadim Saheb writes in the foreword (named as 'Pare Zaan' i.e. introduction) as under: 'Where has that budding and new young poet gone, who in 1948 was seen off and on in the Cultural Front.... Since long he has not been seen.... When this autumn a courageous and graceful teacher at Anantnag paid me his salutations with a smiling face, I recollected something.... besides this that young poet namely, Sarvanand Koul Premi in whose search I was, came to my mind..' The decade from 1948 to 1958 is that period during which two books of Premi 'Kalam Premi' and 'pyam Premi' must have appeared in the market. During this period Premi remained away from Nadim Saheb, but for some years remained close to Mehjoor Saheb and it may not be out of context to say that there was a strong and deep

influence of Mehjoor on his poetry him those very days. He named his books as well like those of Mehjoor. His writings, messages and poetry must bear the influence of love and semi revolutionary songs of Mehjoor. When Premi was twenty years of age Mehjoor had said (actually written, because it has the name of Mehjoor (i.e his signature, and date) that this poet will go ahead if he is encouraged. The words of Mehjoor have been recorded in "aosh ta vosh" book as foreword. The name is 'Peshgoi' and the narration is in Urdu. The date is recorded.

Premi Kashmiri is a new sapling in the poetic orchard. The signs indicate that this sapling if reared with due care, will spread the sweet fragrance in his flower garden.

Mehjoor Kashmiri Nov. 1944

At the time of publishing 'Aosh ta woash' Mehjoor had breathed his last, and as such with due respect to him, the word 'Marhoom i.e late' is written before his name. This writing dates 1944, and subsequently we have a document of 1945, which amply clears that Premi had come in close contact with Mehjoor, that where ever he went, he would take along with him this young poet. And this young man would also associate with this great poet. The document is a letter in the dairy of Mehjoor, which was printed in the news report of the Cultural Academy.

9 June 1945

I went on a Tonga to the house of the Governor which is adjacent the Polo ground. There I met S.S.Chouhan, who was his guest. Our conversation was around poetry. Notes were got written on Kashmiri poetry.

S.S. Chouhan, Shiv Daan Singh Chouhan- Well known progressive worker and Hindi writer who had a special

connection with the progressive writers of Kashmir and who used to take part in the meetings of the Cultural congress. Influence of his intimacy with Mehjoor is vivid not only in the poems, gazhals of that period of Premi, but also in those of a later period, Mehjoor remained associated with the progressive poets for a shorter period. Even we find some progressive features in his poetry as well. However this is a different issue.. Here it is important to note that that Premi was under the observation of two poets of repute Mehjoor and Naadim, and with his writing he had drawn their attention towards himself.

In the decades of 1940, with the events which were taking place in the sub continent, it was un avoidable for poets and intellectuals to form some opinions on them. The subject matter of Ghazals and poems of 'Aosh Ta Woash', in one way or the other evoked from the thinking of that period. Over and above, our poet was connected with politics. He had joined the movement of "Quit Kashmir", 'Kashmir chhod do' and had been arrested as well. Obeisance to the plough flag (Hal wale Janda tum ko pranam) like songs had been written by him and were associated with political leaders. Having joined the movement against monarchy, he saw as a poet the in human effects of Government action. The two nation theory had developed in the country and Hindus and Muslims were, in the eyes of certain leaders two separate nationalities. Its vivid effect was being felt by the people, and at last in the year 1947, the partition of the country along with the the massacre that followed could possibly effect Kashmir as well. The wise leadership was trying to keep away Kashmir from these ills. The progressive thinking which was the predominant representative voice of the then literary circles, were emphasising, brotherhood and religious tolerance. With it was the view to mentally prepare people to stand by the side of

down trodden peasantry and labourers and to oppose capitalists and land lords. This was the social and literary back ground of the book 'Aosh and Woash'

Known subject and the known behaviour

The peculiarity of this poetic collection is that Premi appears as a conscientious poet. He knows the established formats of controlled poetry and knows to use them appropriately. There is no irregularity visible in the usage in metre, repeating words and rhyme. These are actually poems but look like Ghazals. The opening (Matla) and concluding (Makta) lines depict him as a master. Rhyme is also used well. An appraisal of the flow of these poems and the subjects thereof give an indication that the poet must have written a lot more, some time earlier. The topic is general and commonly known but in its details the poet gives his own special hue. The subject matter of these Ghazal shaped poems is: Had he been of orphans, (Aasi hay Yateeman Hund,), the complaint of poor would not reach the God (Ma wati hay Gariban Hanz, Graw Bagwanas). God tells man (Bagwan wanan insans). Leaving poems of the conversation with the God aside, the subject matter of other poems is their second sentence (Kafia).

*Gulshanas Tsuk dar yud kanh baghwana aasi hey
Kyazi gomut sar guzaras goorye wana aasi hay*

Had there been a sympathetic gardener, why should it have turned it into rough and neglected place.

*Kanh chhoo na dar samsar gamkhar gariban hund
Kande Zal bayi khoonkhar samsar gariban hund*

There is nobody to care for orphans in the world. There are only thorny bushes and a blood thirsty world for them.

*Tsa chhook Premi vuchhan sorooy apooz puz kya chalan bapar
Akis Jahil manoshas seety karun takrar ma vata.*

Premi you are watching the veracity of truth untruth.
It is not proper to argue with a savage.

In the poem of 'had there been' (Aasi Hay) the poet has this very regret that the human feelings figure nowhere. Had there been fraternity and brotherhood the life would blossom. The edifice of humanity is to help one another but that happens least.

*Rozhan insan saari akh akis seet nam ta maaz
Zindgi hund bronh kani kanh nishana aasi hay*

All the human beings would stay together in fraternity,
Had there been before us such an emblem of life.

The poem of "Orphans" does not explain the state of indigent orphans but it makes the poet describe the relations between oppressor and oppressed.

*Zaagan kya chhookh zalim varil zan shikaras
Ada tsoat chhoo gatshan pholawun lokchar ytiman hund*

The cruel hawk is chasing its prey.
The blossoming life of orphans terminates at the prime of the life.

The poet is in a shock that the gardener himself is trampling the flowers.

'Mawa Te' poem presents a slow protest against those who spoil life and its beauty. However the metaphors and accent of the poet is that of his own times.

*Ratan bulbul tsatan tus tshog karany tus khana varani
Pazya kawas barun hawas malany saz khar ma vata.*

The nightingale be caught and his tuft cut off spoiling his nest and habitat.

Does it behove a crow to use detergent (saz) heavily to aspire for change of his colour.

The grievance of a poor before God has been written under the influence of Iqbal. However Iqbal deals with different problems in his 'Shikwah' which are connected to the ordained human nature while as Premi picks up his style only from Iqbal. Iqbal narrates his thought in context of Islamic history and belief while as Premi is concerned only with the disparity among rich and poor. He asks the God as to why he has forgotten the poor. For a rich you have earmarked heaven and for us hell. Premi considers the existence of hell and heaven only in this world as it is devoid of fair play and equality.

*Kun chhookh ta kunuy aasakh ada kath tse kunyr howooth.
Zagtah yi vuchhithh rovus yksan thekan wale
Woan tsol sethh az taam yeti yor maroon behtar
Nata chara tse kar sonooy ay chara karan walay.*

You are lone and will remain solitary, and what sort of loneliness you showed.

Oh boaster of equality, I got lost after seeing this world.
We have tolerated enough till date, now it is in the fitness of things to leave for our heavenly abode,
otherwise take some remedial measures for us.

As expected, God while responding to the poor, points to the man's natural weaknesses, and says that I made out one world and gave one message but you created differences. Your inner self is different than the Your inner self is different than from the outer self.

*Mye sooz Quran, Injeel, Gita ti vanim paany
Byon byon kao tsarith dougnyar kadan wale
Biy aas banith Mohmad, biy Ram Krishen, Eesa
Biy aas banith Nanak pazras tse tsalan wale*

I have sent Quran, Bible, and told Gita myself,
Why you chose separation, o follower of duality.
I came as Mohmad Rama, Krishena and Christ.
You who run away from truth hear me, I came as Nanak
as well.

After going through the poem, the poem of Azad in the same rhyme and presenting similar advice, comes suddenly to mind.

*Gitai kya khata khot wan tam Quran wale .
What is the fault of Gita, tell me O believer in Quran.*

In search of Individual voice.

We can say that Premi is ready to search his some individual adage in the poetry written in 1948 or 1949. These poems are representative poems of the time and in them we find that retreat which shows relation of ideas of the young poet Sarvanand Koul with his able teachers and widely known poets. There is no exaggeration when Naadim Saheb remembering Premi of those days says, 'How much quickness, and enthusiasm was depicted in simple poetry of the poet.... in whose heart, the sufferings of man kindled the bright flame of love'. All these poems are of that period but have come out in book shape in 1958 when Naadim Saheb wrote these words.

'Paan Tsader" (1982) shows such an accent in poetry of Sarvanand Koul Premi which attained permanence from the

initial process of experimentation. In this he says more with confidence that. 'My painful lamentation and what befell me, and my view of my life in my poetry, is placed before you. At a latter stage he says about self that.' Though struck in the various vagaries of life I have been successful in coming out of the same, and have moved ahead with the happy dream of life. I am nothing but a poet of optimism. All this, the poet says in his introduction 'two words'(Zeey Katha) of the book. After 'Aosh Ta Woash' 'Gitanjali' is his important book which was published in the year 1975, which is a collection of famous poems by world famous Author Rabindra Nath Tagore. The extent of influence on the poet while translating from the original need not be discussed. Tagore influenced so many generations of Indian poets, he gave hue in keeping with times to sum and substance of the Indian classical poetry and infused a new life in it with other authors Sharat Chander, Bankim Chander Chatterji, Zivi Jander Lal Roy also laid its foundation. Premi while translating Gitanjali also stretches his expression and thinking and all this becomes clear from his book 'Pan Tsader.'

From the subject point of view we find Ghazals, Poems, Vakhs, miscellaneous four liner Pads which the poet calls 'Hot Pieces' (Tatye Tookra). From the hot (Tatye) he perhaps means fresh or contemporary. These are 'pieces' because these are of different nature. These are like Vakh but have same rhyme. That is why the poet calls them 'Vakh Geet' The other four liners have separate titles for example death (mot), Love (Lol) liable to punishment (sazawar) etc.

Ghazals of hope and hopelessness

The portion of ghazals is larger than others. From view point of subject matter they are not new. The love of the beloved and the different shapes of love have been described in poetry in different ways. The wait, the hope, the hopelessness, and

for fulfilling of promise solemn assurances, and deceit against the expectations. These were such subjects of prevalent ghazals which were used by several contemporary poets of Premi and he has also used them. The poet wails in these ghazals that whom I served to the best of my ability, that lover also deserted me. I was friendly whereas he was inimical. Still I wait to see him. Still I wish for his long life. I have attained the old age but he did not till date fulfil his old promise. It is evident that these Ghazals have same loud cry which poet assimilated in the company of Mehjoor. There are in these ghazals , Flowers, Nightingales, Hawks, Daffodils, and thorns which shape the feelings and thoughts of the poet. However in between, the individual thoughts and understanding of the poet also crystallise. At this stage Premi further strengthens his peculiar personality and aspires for human values and public welfare and gives an inkling of religious brotherhood and admiration for prevailing Kashmiri ethos. The poetry on this subject has been written by Premi in a zest and has given an account of his personal experiences. Some examples;

*Dande phalye gayi swon zan paas
Lachh rong Lakhchun hungni manzas
Zotan zan aase aakash zoon
Vachhas pamposh tooren pamboochh
nerin phhalith gatshe
Yiman voochh voochh me lolus lagan gutsh tar rozun*

The teeth when visible are like pure gold
In the midst of chin is mole worth Lac of cloves.
These were sparkling like moon in sky
From breast lotuses should sprout the seed (Nilofer)
Watching them my love should come to fruition.
If only we express our plight to one another with human
feelings and love.

Kyazi ada balye bad gumani rozi hay yem rut hada tas
 made woth pan
 Mada rastis man saaf Woochhiv Zoon kheni khot yus tas
 laryov kya
 Kyazi aadam aasmanyen rozi hay

Why should there have been ill thoughts /suspicion.
 Those who stayed in limit their ego vanished.
 Without ego the mind becomes clear.
 And what does a person achieve by considering himself
 superior
 why should he have the superiority complex.

The reality of the world
Pazras yeti chhakhh voothmets kaer
Apzyook bazar gomoot aam
Dinas dharmas az bapar
Dy koos? sorooy paanas taam
Yas yas rut kor tas lug veh
Pazrook aah tas kari na cha

Here the truth has been shelved and the lie is rampant.
 The falsehood has become common and religion has
 become a business.

Who is God? man is the master of everything.
 Those who were treated well feel they have been cheated.
 Would it be they are torn apart by exclamatory Ah of
 truth.

Departing from the traditional subjects of ghazal,
 the poet has surely tried to record his experiences in this
 frame.

Lolas byol gali titi nasa bani zan
Zoon peyi chhali chhali titi nasa bani zanh

Deay yeli asye yeti var tavov
Wan tow kati lagi baji koli taar

The love will entirely vanish, that can not be,
 The moon will fall down and break in pieces,
 that also can not be.

If we practise hatred here how can we cross a big river
 i.e we can not carry on in this world.

The difference and the peculiarity of these Ghazals is that the poet employing\ traditional accent, and using traditional metaphors, and in place of self, gives testimony of his social consciousness which is also evident in his poems. 'Pan Tsader' which is also the name of the book is its representative example. "kamye rachh yeti myane Pan Tsader" / Who saved here my small water fall' is repeating line of verse and the poet passes through various worldly experiences in them in which there is individual love and mixture of worldly sweetness and bitterness as well. Pan Tsader, also says, that after shedding enough of tears, I expressed my plight to the lover, tossed against stones but this journey was tedious and this could be performed only by him who would dare to cross the ocean and rise to the heights of the sky. In the end the poet gives the message that the path of peace and a straight path will lead us to the destination.

Similarly after denoting his irksome experience, the poet finally wants to communicate to society some good message but he is not confined to the use of customary constraint of rhyme and Rhythm of a Ghazal (Radif & kafia) and as such gives a free play to his thought to sour high in any direction. Alongside of 'Pan Tsader' is 'Rooda Jare' which has line of repetition (Voj)'Sozi dil myon bozi roode Jare ya lo'. Subsequently, the poet from the moment of birth of rain to

its journey to the earth, up to the strewing verdant grass with pearls and presents it in various stages and facets with his special touch. The rain drops fall down in a lavish way from sky and filling beds etc. to the brim accumulating in depths and streams, grassy patches and flowers giving them a new youth and beauty. So far all understand. The poet is happy that she is playing the pleasant music of love, serving water to the thirsty, be it spring or summer (Sonth or Har Shrawun) and shares love with equanimity, looks both to intimate and unknown(close and distant)etc. At last the poet accepts this also that with its pleasant musical sound and thrilling voice the rain drops teach him that all obstructions go with virtuous conduct and good behaviour. To communicate this message to us, the poet is in forefront in other verses as well. In Snow Flakes (Shina Thues) poem(which has been written in free verse) the poet expects the following incredible to happen with the falling of snow flakes.

*Fund bazan fund gari phor booziv
Fitnan Takh lug ada vati takh zan.*

*Yamath Shina Thues akashi bon woth
Handrer vooshnyov kath kush huer khot ...
Zeenith Premi nun drav aekher.*

Hear me, the deceit has robbed the house of deceiver and has cut the mischievous to size. As the snow flake fell down to earth, it warmed the cold weather and the chill went up..... After winning, Premi also became a known person.

Description of personal experience

Premi in this portion of verses shows up more, in his own hue. Those poems are I will never die (Ba Mara Na Zanh)

and one night (Akh Rath). Both of these are conceptual verses in a fantasy. In the first verse the poet depicts his own make believe death scene in words and when his death caused a hue and cry that this poet was their confident and had shared thoughts with him. He was Premi of the whole world...

*Ek nyepotran dits krakh
Ba dima na pannis tathis potras marna....
ek yetiman vun
Mye kus kari vonye athha roat
A childless person cried
I will not allow my dear son to die.....
An orphan cried
who will come to my rescue now.....*

Similarly 'Akh Raat' throws up the following picture. During a summer night suddenly it rains heavily and causes tension to the homeless couple.

*Kya aosum karma lanis chham na chhapnas jaay kanh....
Andre hooy woth mosman hund nebra roodan zor kur....*

What was in store for me that I do not have even a shelter. Within the innocent children raised hue and cry and without rain is in its full fury.

In this situation the poet opines about this uneven world.

*Aasi hey Lankayi bagran vol kanh pazye yor yud
Ash akis ty khash beyis ma aasi hay gomut deov....
Aasi hay ma sharifan sadan mashan lara lar....
Had there been a truthful dispenser in Lanka.*

It might not have happened that one would enjoy and the other would get executed.....The gentle and simple would not forget being chased... etc.

This tragedy gives the poet a back drop to express himself and he on his own level reveals his own story although his pain in the long run ceases to be his own and assumes a social character. Besides these 'Taj' and 'Tse kun' poems, describe the relationship of love and beauty which are the basis of Premi's poetry. This also is in the hands of man 'Yiti Insanas Panas Taam' expresses such thoughts loudly and consciously. The life of a person will become sweet by good deeds otherwise the examples of bad deeds are visible every day. Mothers breast feeding sometimes proves painful for the child but if the mother dies in a parched state the son slips away. Some may rub salt to the wounds of a widow, the brother may kill his brother etc. But it is moral obligation of a person to be away from such work.

In the seventh and eighth decades of 20th century attention of poets turned towards the internal expansion of abstract 'Vakh' and its outward effect and many wrote them explaining semi secret experiences and to certain extent about the mundane actions and reactions. Premi also appears to have written them in similar vein, wherein stand recorded his those experiences which are based on old Indian traditions and sacred eastern beliefs. But the poet without any craftiness admits that the Lal Ded's experiences of truth initiated him.

*Lali hund sath mye man b
Prezlyom andri sat kuy deep
vom kar zanith vom kar zonoom
Zonum aasun gatshe seit.....
Lola ashi wani tas pad chhim chhalanye
Zeh chhoom nimas dalya jan.*

I conveyed my mind the truth of Lal Ded
The lamp of truth kindled within me

or this

I found Om Kar and perceived same

And realized it should remain with me.....

or

Would wash His feet with the tears of love

I long to take a nice gift to Him

In the genre of Vakh he has said some such verses which are called 'Vakh Geet' and in them using repeating line called 'Voj' of famous poet Parmanand's verse 'Kata sankata Mukat dari'. Even in the genre of Vakh they resemble from the view point of content and subject matter to Bakhti verses.

Van paan pana nooy kamyē kor yeti grata

Kamyē tool zanmook gob bore hey

Ata gand kamyē kor kas gayi deji atta

Kata sankata hi mukata dari

Say who has undergone the rigours for realization of his soul

Who has lifted the heavy burden of life

Who has tied the burden well, whose tie got loosened.

Simultaneously the poet conveys this messages

Kame Tsor Muma, Kame Tsor yeti Bata

Kunirache wati yeti kame trove row.

Who made the choice of Muma (Muslim) and who made here a choice of Bata (Kasmiri Pandit). Who shone on the path of Holy One

With contents, and four line couplets, Premi gives a crystal clear form to worldly experiences, that the death is painful

for both ill healthy people. The love is not a marketable commodity, and hence can not be purchased and concludes that being a writer I have to write and give voice against the immorality and unevenness, cruelty and disorder of the world. It is the key statement Of Sarvanand Koul Premi of his poetic personality.

*Vaay kor kartaam mye zagtas gov bunuel
Tamyek katarye mosum vaniv kuni booj dhha
Tsarye Tsarye ba kus yatim tamyek choor hut
Vanta mye rotmuk kalam chha dooj chha*

I exclaimed in sorrow long back, which moved the world
He killed innocents and nobody raised a finger
choosing the helpless and the orphans he strangled
them

Have I kept the pen and paper from recording it.

Plentiful unpublished poetry

Although it is not always proper to look seriously into the unpublished writings of a poet, yet we can only make a cursory appraisal of Sarvanand Koul Premi because most of his printed material got lost due to unfavourable circumstances in Kashmir. The other fact is that whichever manuscript he wrote in his own hand, are in all respects complete and could have been sent to press in his own life time. For example 'Ramayana'. This manuscript is written on 80 fullsize pages on average of 20 lines per page. Ram Katha is spread on 8 chapters (named Kand meaning 'sectional division') and the name of Kands is according to the Ram Charit Manus, Where as the last Kand is titled Utter Ramayan in which is narrated the story about return of Ram, Sita and Laxman to Ayodhya after conquering Ravan and on the basis of which the famous

Sanskrit dramatist Bhow Bhoti wrote "utter Ram Charit'. Whole Ramayana has been written in long rhythmic narrative like that of Prakash Ram's Ramayana. One thing is that, in that Ramayana it has at place Lilas, prayers, and praise of God which are different in nature and have their own importance, where as Premi has not made any such endeavour in his Ramayana. The narration has a good flow with use of simple direct story idioms. Examples:

1. Doha sapdyow vuchhan aos ane dashrath
Chhetyomoot hang woochhun aki parye yamath
Sethah tas shakook sapdyow gow vetsaras
Patim doh vatye pazye pathye baharas.....
2. yi draw Shri Ram tas sitayi tshaaran
Vanow manze draaw kas Sitayi tshaaran
Kulen tay beyih kulan tay aabsharan
Pratshan gow pana Shri Ram sabzaara.

There came a day when Raja Dashrath looked into to the mirror. He saw a streak of grey hair on one side of his head. He felt dismayed and deeply thought that the last days of spring had set in (That of life had set in.)

2. It was Shri Ram who left for in search of Sita, through forest trees, rivers and waterfalls. Shri Ram himself made query from greenery around.

The need of the hour is that this manuscript is got printed out and then alone can critics make an independent critical study to determine its status among about a dozen of Ramayanas.

Similarly is another document 'Myane Mada Shalla' This is a long poem which the poet has written under the influence of popular poem 'Madhu Shalla' (beverage house) written by famous Hindi Poet Hari Vamsh Roy Bachan. But Premi after

calling it 'Myanye' gives it a distinct name though message in both of them is same. That the difference in affluence and poverty, caste and religious discards are not qualities of humane behaviour. The humanism is the highest duty. As in a bar a bartender serves all with love and affection and without distinction, similarly we should also treat the entire humanity, a creation of God and should love all human beings equally.

*Ati yaar sarooda saaz wazan
Ati be fikri hund aalam voochh
Ati yaara dilan hund kun aalam
Ati gaer na kanh vopraz na kanh
Ati saeri bagran loley lol
Ati sarey chavan pana chavan
Ati bagrith akh akh qatra chhoo chun
Ati loli manza lolmata lay karan.....
yus aao patay pahan su chhoo saras
Insan chhoo insanas parzan..
Vewhar yihay chhoo mada shalayi manz*

My friend, sweet music flows there.
It is a carefree world, and only a single idea pervades
in all the hearts.
There is no stranger or no duality and all give out only
love.
There every one sips and serves the love sharing
every drop thereof where out of love one is held in the
swing of arms...
One who comes late occupies a first place.
Man serves man,
This is how they behave in a Mada Shalla...

Mada Shalla word is a derivation from Hindi word 'Madhu Shalla.' Only one poet wrote poems in Hindi with drinking

place (Sharab Khana) as central idea because as per the Urdu tradition, the images of poetry about alcoholic drinks, youth, server, kahwa shop, preacher, advisor were already in use in plenty, to which poets were directly or indirectly pointing and becoming doyen in the mushairas. Because of the traditions of the Urdu and Persian poetry the symbols and concepts were not new to Kashmiri poetry. Premi in his poem 'Mada Shaala' wants to put Hindi traditions into Kashmiri not even that but simply wants to impart the content of the popular Hindi poet. Therefore, it is not that important though with it Premi propagates equality and brotherhood which alone is its importance.

*Ati lolas sajda chhi sari diwan
Na chhoo myon atyn bagwan badal
Na chhoo chon atyn rahman badal
Ati Premi koon ta koonyr yksan
Vala ati bsavov nov dunya.....*

All bow down before love there
My Bagwan and your Rehman are not different
Premi (Love) is one and oneness pervades all over

Let us live in this new world

He writes in the foreword that he has not read the original 'Madhu Shaala' completely. However while going for M.A. in Hindi and Prabakar degrees he read some interesting narratives of the book. One of his friends played its tape, he was so impressed that he wrote 'Kashir Madu Shaala. He accepts this thing also that he has no experience of the bar. Due to this we can not consider this long poem in continuation to those poems which give the indication of his immediate influence and his becoming active. He has himself indicated in the foreword of the book that this poem is neither translation

of the original nor its copy, and that is true which is revealed by comparison of the two.

Getting influenced by some book or an incident instantly and to put one's emotions into verse is a poetic and literal activity. However the quality of the poetry should be excellent, that means that whatever the poet writes after being influenced he should have gone through such experiences himself and the language should also bear with him in his literary identity.

The outcry on account of human killing

When on 4 April 1979 Zia ul Haq the Pakistani dictator sent Zulficar Ali Bhutto Prime Minister of Pakistan to gallows, there was a severe reaction in Kashmir against the said murder. Sarvanand Koul Premi being, a poet, a friend of mankind and an Indian, felt intensely grieved and for three days participated and lead mourning processions of his village. Similarly 'a shocking incident took place in Holy Kaaba when it was desecrated. Hearing this sad news I shed tears profusely and wrote another poem 'Vetshnay'. The name of first poem is 'Aakhri Mulaqaat' and pertains to the last meeting which took place between Bhutto and his daughter Be Nazir in Rawal Pindi Jail. But it appears he had written this poem on some other papers from which he has copied only one couplet, and left up to 4 blank pages for the left over couplets. The wording of the first couplet is as follows: (Nusrat Bhutto addresses her husband)

Shahidan ander chukh tse sartaj Zulfi
Karun chooy tse shahido puz raj Zulfi
Tse chukh sone aadar tse chukh sone deka tika
Tse chookh na shahidan pazyook daj Zulfi

She addresses her husband as Zulfi and martyr and says, that you are the crown of the martyrs, you have to be a true

ruler. You personify our respect and you are a piece of pendant of our forehead. You are martyr's truthful dowry.

The name of the document in which these two poems are included is 'Aalath.' Aalath means that ceremony according to which a small pitcher of water and a burning lamp in a plate (thali) is passed over the head of a honourable person or a guest at the entrance door. In short Aalath is a welcome sign. In the foreword of this manuscript, Premi speaks of two things that the God is one, without any duality, He is Rehman and He is Rahim (Merciful). He is all pervading and merciful. He is both Om and Allah. Sacred places of His obeisance are at Haridwar and Kashi, Kaaba and Yaroshalam and in Amritsar... Under the above said spirit I express my thoughts in these poems.' And the next poem of this manuscript is The path of truth (Satach Vath.) It has 22 four line (4 lined) couplets. Firstly the holiness of Kaaba and its importance in Islam has been dealt with. However the poet says *'where there was the source of light for the world, there appeared a pearl-bead of the times a rose of beauty blossomed there'* Then that tragic thing took place in which *'this holy land's sanctity was eroded by satanic people ...Who were those liars and satans who called themselves followers but ignored the teachings of the prophet and Holy Quran..... they were falsely proclaimed as Islami. Come, and we will tear off their dishonesty. We will give new utterances to the love. We will, with brotherhood and hand in hand, adopt that way of truthful life again. Premi will again spread the word of love.*

The poet feels being distinct that he has not seen 'any word (kalam) from a praiseworthy Kashmiri poet' on the aforesaid two subjects.

Sarvanand Koul Premi: Translations

Knowledge of 4 languages.

While making an appraisal of the life and personality of Sarvanand Koul Premi we find that he had vast study of different languages and literatures but he was more interested in Kashmiri being his mother tongue and it was not only in daily use in his house but he got a tradition of listening and reciting Sofi and abstruse compositions. Many people with such tastes used to visit his house. Another thing was that Premi ji got married to a girl from Hangal Gund where besides others, the precedent of reciting the poetical compositions of Swami Mirza Kak was prevalent. This became a major reason for his interest in Kashmiri poetry. Besides this he had from his childhood a love for books published in other languages also. Every Kashmiri Pandit family had a practice of Urdu and Persian and this was also a case with his family. Premi ji studied Prabakar and did his M.A. in Hindi resulting in extensive study. At least whatever was to be studied by him as teacher he studied that. Due to Hindi and religious and spiritual environment in the household he remained connected to Sanskrit as well to such an extent that the idea of translating Bhagawad Gita came to him at the age of 24-25. Whatever the merit of the said translation but his courage is such about which we can think and analyse his leaning to study and his zeal for original composition. English was and still continues compulsorily being taught in the state. Consequently Premi had a good command over it. Thus he remained associated

with 5 languages (Kashmiri, Urdu, Hindi, English, Sanskrit). From time to time he would read something in all the 5 and except Sanskrit wrote something in all these languages. In such circumstances, it could not be ruled out that after studying impressionable literary work in a language, one would not be inclined to translate it into another language. That is why we see that Prem ji took up the responsibility of translating big and important books. He took this job on his own and as per him it was welcomed by (1)readers. This encouraged him. Once a chance given to him for getting the printing and publishing of his translation work done under the Government management but as per his saying 'The time available being short, and I did not feel proper to take in hand new work which would meddle with my other activities. I also became indolent'. This was his translation of Gitanjali which was to be published later on by Cultural Academy. However that did not happen. Similarly he translated Bhagwat Gita in Urdu and that too he published himself. However it also becomes clear that it was the object of Sarvanand koul Premi to translate important books in Kashmiri which he did to a great extant.

In all we have two books available translated by Premi ji.

1. Gitanjali written by Bengali poet Rabindra Nath Tagore. There is no where recorded as to from which language the author has translated it into Kashmiri. It has been printed in 1975.
2. Shrimad Bhagawad Gita written by Maharshi Ved Vyas has been accepted as the writer of the Maha Bharat epic. First chapter of this basic Sanskrit poem was translated by Sh Premi in 1947 in Kashmiri. Later on he published

in all six chapters in 1959 in two parts. The first part had been completed in 1958.

3. The same book (Bhagawad Gita) was translated in Urdu by him which was printed after the martyrdom of Premi ji although the messages and letters of praise included in the foreword pertain to 1981, 1982, and 1984. It appears that he must have completed it in phases up to 1980. Even it includes the good wishes 'Aashirvad' of Master Zinda Koul wherein he writes that Premi ji recited for the first time first chapter of the translation (It is pure kashmiri translation) dated 14 Nov. 1985 and thus three translations of two books are available with us which as per their volume are comparable to many voluminous books.

In sequence of time we take up the translation of Gita ji by Sarvanand Koul. It has as per he sad, been completed in many years and divided and printed in separate parts. Only six chapter are available with us. Among the list of unpublished books made available to us Bhagawad Gita is at serial 1 of list but it is not available. It means the manuscript must have been ready but the same became a causality of terrorism of 1990.

Translations and correction

The translation is clearly pointing to one thing that with the passage of time and with experience, Premi ji is becoming perfect. There are shortcomings in the translation of first chapter which in the seventh chapter are either absent or have got reduced. It appears that when Premi ji printed these all the six chapters together he was alive to their deficiencies. The printed words and sometimes complete couplets, of the copy available with me, (perhaps this very copy was with the translator as well) have been corrected with an ink pen and

in its place Kashmiri text (or couplet) has been written which is in Premi's hand. Had he been alive he would might have, prepared a new edition for publication, after incorporating the corrections. The examples are as under.

The original text	The correction (printed)
1. Tse avinashi su zaan tath chhuoo na gatshan soor	Gatshan chhoo na naash tath beyi chhu na gatshan soor
2. Duyow tarfow kin vonye shaster pherhan	Yudus manz aore yore hathyar pherhan
3. Tayari as vonye purae teer nerhan	Tayari poore vonye as teer nernas
4. Yi awnashi choo tath chhoo na nash sapdan	Na chhoos zanh nash nay chhus faan sapdan
1. Know him ever everlasting and indestructible	That does not get perished nor destroyed
2. The weapons would be applied from either side	The weapons would used by both sides of battle
3. preparation was complete for arrows to be shot	The preparation being com- plete for shooting arrows
4. Which is everlasting and and not destructible	Neither is it destructable nor perishable

Similarly has the translator corrected many couplets or their part to make them plausible or simple. The readers want more such correction because Bhagawad Gita is not easy to translate in Kashmir poetry or in shape of verses.

It needs sound, skilled and well experienced poet, otherwise it becomes word for word translation. The weak point comes out glaringly, especially where a philosophical point has been explained.

*Chhu yus rozan santushth boz Arzan
yamis rozan chhu man prath sata prasan
seda sed shook harshas akh vuchhan chhoo
Karam yogi gatshan choo na band asaan choo*

O Arjan listen me! One who remains contented, whose mind remains always happy, who treats the sorrow and joy alike, he is a karam yogi and he always smiles and never gets held up.

In fact the poet has recorded the meaning of some technical words (like sed ased) but these are incomplete, inadequate and do not help for understanding the philosophic spirit. Gita has been translated and commented up on by several scholars and philosophers, from Abhinov Gupta to Dr. Radha Krishnan. Still many points require explanation and interpretation. To translate with the object of breaking a couplet and a line into two will leave such weak points that too in Kashmiri language which has a limited vocabulary and limited use. The other point is that while translating technical words into Kashmiri, Urdu, Persian or Arabic languages, pose negligible problems because to-days Kashmiri is still preparing technical and theoretical wealth, with the help of these languages. Its growth and cultural form has been under their influence, whose mode i.e. cultural set up is nearer these two languages. But that does not mean that verses of Gita and Mahabharat whose cultural base is our civilization can not be translated in easy Kashmiri. There are such couplets even in the translation under discussion which are worth noting. For example:

*Manush trawith tshanan yitha pranye vaster
Tshanan nalye navye rozan chhoo kar far
(ba karofar chhoo sirif kafia milnavna khatar*

Ratith updesh pazrook gyan bani tsey
Gatshi yeli gyan mooh tsali tse
Voochhakh zeev pana saeri atmaha
Patow sorooy mye Parmahatmas manz.
 Man throws away his old clothing
 Wears new ones to live with dignity
 The sermon will impart knowledge of truth to you
 After acquiring knowledge the greed will go away
 You will see all living beings in your person
 And in turn will find all in your own self.

After the translation of holy Bhagawad Gita, the translation of Gitanjali made by Premi ji was published but we will first take up Urdu translation of Gita which he had completed in 1980 but could not be published.

Bhagawad Gita in Urdu

This book is important in many ways. One is that it indicates the leaning of Premi ji towards Urdu. He says in its foreword that he does not claim to be an Urdu poet, but has great love for it. Secondly the point of importance is that the said translation covers all the 18 chapters. Thirdly, it contains an introduction, explanatory essays and commentary etc., which are 41 in number. In them the Translator has cited those all translations (including those of Urdu) which he has gone through. In addition to this he has tried to make clear the common textual meaning about Shri Krishna and the philosophy of Gita. Notes and explanatory details of the characters, incidents and the connected stories mentioned in the narrative, have been given. One/two essays have been written giving details of the battle of Mahabharata and its relation with Kashmir. That is to say that this book educates the reader completely about Bhagawad Gita. Not only this he has like

a mature researcher prepared a dictionary of words of Sanskrit and Hindi serially, towards the closure of the book, giving simple and equivalent words in Kashmiri. He has given a bibliography of Urdu, Hindi and English books he had gone through while preparing this book which provides an insight into his patience, steadfastness and diligence. However towards beginning of the book, 24 names of senior and young personalities in Urdu and English have been recorded. These include political personalities like Karan Singh, Kashap Bhandu, Prem Nath Bazaz and Master Zinda Koul, Gulam Rasul Santosh, Mirza Aarif, Tak Zaina Giri, Margoob Banhali and Mohan Nirash like literary figures and some other professors religious scholars, journalists (for example Nand Lal Wattal, R. K. Kak). But their opinion does not make any difference with the study of the reader. Only the opinion of literary persons can to some extent be authoritative regarding this translation. Master Zinda Koul has listened to two chapters but it is not clear whether these were in Kashmiri or Urdu. The writing date 1959 points to it to have been the Kashmiri translation. Mirza Arif writes that he has not still studied it however he has gone through the foreword of Karan singh and as he has great regard for him. Mohammad Zaman Azurdah expresses his faith that 'the sagacious will study this in the back ground of passionate trust and uprightness of Prem ji'. After perusing the translation what he felt he does not express. Besides these literati, the opinions of those who figure in the list, are not given. It is said that these got left over at the time of going to press. The fact is that the calligraphy of this book was being done when Premi ji and his family were living under the shadow of death.

However this translation is better than Kashmiri one and shows his command over Urdu language, and after grasping the textual matter it exhibits his capacity to translate in the

back ground of correct Kashmiri. However some problems appear to have cropped up even in said translation like difficulties in translation into Kashmiri. The names of the characters have at places been changed or shortened so that the metre becomes pleasing. For example the name is 'Drisht Dyooman' it becomes 'Drasht Deyman' 'Soobadra becomes 'Swabadra', 'Saatkay', 'Saatk', 'Dritrashtra', 'Dharatrasht' etc. At such places the rhyme of the verse and the number of words has become more important. Similarly some technical words have been kept in their original semblance with their meaning in foot notes. It is better to retain the original word in place of its substitute, but it should be accompanied by a explanatory detail as the word meaning alone is insufficient. However at places the translator has been successful in presenting original philosophical aspect in simple language.

*Hai jinko akali sleem akal peh jinko naaz hai
Karam ke phal ka natija tyag kar jo be niyaz
Gam ke bandan se woh aazad haen aabad hen
Hen nahin aawagawan woh lamakan hen shaad hen
jis ne mamta aur takabur ko jalaya aag mentally
jis ne apni kamnawon ko milaya aag men
Bus wahi rahta hai aakhir be lagav insan hai
Usko shanti hai sada aur woh ba shan ha*

Those who have subtle intellect and are in know of it, and are not attached to the fruit of their action and are indifferent , they are happy and free of grief. They do not fall in to the cycle of birth and rebirth, live blissfully in union with God. One who has burnt attachment, pride and desire, only he remains unattached and lives blissfully with dignity.

At places he has increased words, half sentences and

idioms. Taking care of rhyme and rhythm is not bad, if it is not distant from the spirit and purpose of the couplet. But ignoring original basic word or idiom is wrong. Over all appraisal reveals that such mistakes are minimum in it. The translation undoubtedly increases the stature of Sarvanand Premi as translator and researcher which is beyond doubt.

Gitanjali in sweet language

In connection with centenary celebration of Tagore held throughout in India in 1961, the Government of J&K constituted a committee and Cultural Academy was directly associated with it. The Secretary of the Academy asked Premi ji to submit his translation of Gitanjali at earliest but Premi ji could not do so due to paucity of time. There after he published his translation himself in 1975 i.e. after 14 years. Perhaps the Academy has not given it even as a common manuscript the financial assistance which is its practice. Perhaps the translator did not submit it to them, or whatever actually happened, that however does not effect the printing of this book, it being an authoritative one in our hands. It has no address of the printer but its availability address is recorded as 'Sarvanand Koul Premi Kashmiri P.O. Sof Anantnag Kashmir.' A foreword written by jia Lal Koul Naazir titled 'Nazar' is recorded at the very outset, in which he terms this effort of translation 'successful worth praise.' He accepts that 'though the vocabulary of Kashmiri language is not that much wide so as to enclose the artful literary colour of Tagore but still with any Kashmiri knowing can not deny the fact that Premi ji has comprehended the soul of Tagore's verses and with an open heart has in sweet and pleasing words, tried to dive into depth of his feelings. Since the mention or proper valuation of this third translation of Premi ji has not been done during the centenary celebrations by any one, the above statement of Nazir saheb is therefore relevant.

Premi ji, sincerely, without hypocrisy was delighted by the progress of Kashmiri language. In the foreword two talks 'Za katha' he reveals this as well and offers his endeavour of this translation for its promotion. For giving access to Kashmiri readers especially to the poetry of Gitanjali and the philosophy recorded there in. 'I have tried enough on my part that this great philosophy of Tagore should be translated in sweet, straight and simple language..... his thoughts and ideas have not been turned inside out. To make the language sweet, no substitution of words has been done at any place'. This assertion of Premi becomes evident after going through the translation. In fact it has been the conscious effort of the poet to maintain the sweetness of the language. It is no less because the original Gitanjali has been rendered in Indian languages (not alone in Indian culture) and this has become the reviving factor of the culture and literature which with the interaction with the western culture and literature came into being in twentieth century. The another important thing is that this was the time for beginning of western romanticism in the Indian literature. The romanticism had appeared in the west about 100 or 150 years back after the industrial revolution and in our country it appeared after getting connected with the west through English. However the important thing to note here is that the romanticism was adding to the aspect of natural beautiful thoughts and optimism of life. Due to this a specific vocabulary, and a style had come in being, and such vocabulary was already in vogue due to Sofi, bhakhti... idioms and ideas. These words were sweet, unphilosophical, non technical and pleasing. Whatever was left over of the Kashmiri poetry, that with the words of philosophy of Islam, Bhakhti and semi philosophy, was in all respects romantic and consequently the romantic Bengali poetry was easy to translate. Premi has taken advantage of this.

As the light of the day is hidden in the night's darkness similarly in my awareness this cry comes out 'That I yearn for You and none else.'(38)

From dawn to dusk I sit near my own door. I know that good occasion will suddenly come when we will be facing each other.(44)

The original sweetness

The language of the translation is polished. Since the translation is in prose hence is not bound by the requirement of rhyme or rhythm. Basically it is in prose but has the hue of poetry. This appears to have been in the original language (perhaps English) from which it has been translated. How could it be from original Bengali. An effort appears to have been made to put in sweetness of almost Bengali language (basically it is a poem) in its Kashmiri translation. The well known poet Soom Nath Veer writes, 'I understood Tagore after perusing the translation of Premi ji.'

Sarvanand Koul Premi: Miscellaneous writings

Genealogy and compilation

Conspicuously Sarvanand Koul Premi is a noted poet...a Kashmiri poet

It is said that he has written poetry in Urdu, Hindi and English. But we have the names only of the books but not any material available with us in this behalf. Besides poetry he has done translations as well of which the mention has been made in the previous chapter. But besides the original creative poetry and the translations he has tried his hand on other genres also and we will make of mention of that and a comparison of that will be made and weighed in this chapter. We will call it miscellaneous writing.

The list we have included in this book at page no. 33-34, according to that Premi ji has besides Poetry and translation written in following genres.

1. Biography or genealogy.
2. Editing and compilation

The geneaology written by him are as follows.

1. Mirza Kak (Urdu) second edition 2007.
2. Mathra Devi (Hindi) 1985
3. Lali Shwari (Urdu) without date.

None of them is a book in Kashmiri. Besides genealogy he has edited a manuscript which bears title 'vakh ha Mirza

Kak (kak Sab). Regarding Lali Shori manuscript Vakhs have been enumerated last of all which by way of a collection which he had got from unknown source.

Mirza Kak

'Mirza Kak' is a booklet on 30 pages which was published in Kashmir in 1960 and was written and completed in honour of popular Saint Mahatma Miza Kak. His (Premi ji's) son published it again in 2007 from Delhi. Premi writes in its foreword 'Sapna' that somebody came in his dream and asked him to take pen and write it down. He woke up and wrote down the pedigree. As the inspiration of writing this genealogy was result of a miracle, its spiritual inspiration made the writer to record only miracles of Mirza Kak. Whatever miracles throughout his child hood, adolescence till attainment of salvation are said to be of Mirza Kak or are attributed to him stand recorded in this booklet. Actually it is a magazine spread over 12 chapters (perhaps we can not call it a booklet also) describing 12-14 miracles in the same way as these were heard by Premi ji. Neither has he been witness to any of them nor recorded the evidence of such a person who himself felt or witnessed such miracle. Besides these miracles, how Swami ji lived his life, there are only 2- 4 references recorded in this behalf and that is all. This being so we can not call it an authentic genealogy. Leaving it aside, the writer has command over Urdu. In the end of the booklet, four liner 'pad' of Kak saheb has been given as sample.

In this connection we will take up another book of Premi ji which is in Urdu. A collection of Kashmir kalam of Swami Mirza Kak has been included in it. The name of the booklet is 'Vakh hai Mirza Kak' and according to its foreword, 'Pehli Baat' it has been printed in 1963. Besides foreword it contains

a concise write up of brief history of life 'Mukhtasar Halati Zindgi' and another essay of the name of 'Vakh' (poeticised). Rest are four line verses 'Tsu misraay' of Mirza Kak which have been known as 'Vakh' Where these vakhs begin in the book their narration is as under.

Bhang: Bajhan (meaning Bhajan) naam rama rama
These so called 'Bhang' are 35. After this is 'Bhang Rab Sahib Prabu ji' -14 - After that is ' Bhang - Tyuth var may ditam divo' Grant me such a boom -8 'Bhang 'Toshi ham aki vena poshay.' you will be pleased with a flower. 5 The total Bhang are 62 (Pad) which are said to be of Swami Mirza Kak and have been included in the booklet.

Vakh looking like Vatsun

Prem ji records in 'Vakhye' that Mirza Kak had said thousands of poems and in common parlance these are called 'Vakhye'. 'Thousand' of poems may cause misunderstanding because Prem ji has been able only to collect less than a hundred. That too when he was Kak Sahib's follower, were connected to Hangal Gund village by way of close relationship. However this appears to be an exaggeration. So far nobody has come forth with more Vakhs of Kak Saheb. It is not essential to write voluminous for attainment of high stature to a poet. The Lal Vakhs are available to the tune of 100-125 and that is all. The second thing is to use word Vakh for these poems (which has been named vakhye due to wrong orthography). Vakh is such a kind of quality of eloquence which from the view point of meaning, phonetics and prolonging is specific, and its users after Lal Ded preserved it in its form. However with the common people this must have happened that basic verses pertaining to spiritual essence, maxim stylish poetry

must have been recognised as vakh, as happened with word 'Bhajan' to Bajan. Bajan is not a basic poetic genre either in Sanskrit or Hindi but the submission, life story, praise of the qualities etc., such kind of bhakhti verses can be read, recited or sung like bajans. Bajan means to pray by singing. Despite this some poets use this as a Bajan genre and our critics do not point to this anomaly. Bajan is connected to the singing, and is not the name of any kind of poetry.

Now the question is whether the mirza Kak's 4 line stanzas (tsu misrai) can be called Vakhs? There is one manifest impediment to call them Vakh which is due to their repeating line called 'Woj'. The first 35 have repeating line ie Woj 'Recite the name Ram Ram' (Bajan naam Ram Ram). After them as many as 14 have 'Rab Saheb Prabhu ji' and for 8 'God give me such a boon' (Tyuth war ditam divo) and last 5 'offering of a flower will make you happy'. These have been divided into 4 parts on the basis of their style and called 'Bhang.' Bhan. 'Bhang' is an interesting usage which no other poet has used. Bhang which we will call Bang in Kashmir means breaking or splitting into parts. But no one has used it in context of the meaning of the part, pad, 4 lined, or two lined poetry. It is a strange coincidence that a poetical genre in Maratha is called 'Bhang.' It is a question of research whether the Bhang has a Maratha origin or something else.

The four lined vakhs of Mirza Kak undoubtedly demand attention. These include expression concerning spirituality which was started in Kashmir by Lal Ded or pre-existed her. However the spirituality of Lal Ded is concerned with formless God. It was also supplemented by Nund Reshi in Islamic colour and thus strengthened it further. The Formless God is the basic concept of the belief of Kashmiri Shavism and Islamic Sofi belief. But Bhakhti is not confined to bare images

made in accordance with thought. The sentiment of surrender of a spiritual person brings him more nearer to God while conceiving Him in the images of goddesses, gods and incarnations in the spirit of friendship with Him, and makes him to think with Him, a genuine relationship of a parent or the offspring. However the bhakhti of God both in unmanifest (Nirakar) and manifest, (sagun) form, and to strengthen the appearance made in accordance with ideal image, has repeatedly been expressed and explained. This being so, that up to Ropa Bhawani, Mirza Kak, Parmanand, Krishna Joo Razdan, Bhagwan Ded and Zinda Koul after fixing His form as one (Saakar or Nirakar) it is difficult to categorise them if they were devotees of unmanifest or manifest form. Mirza Kak also says so. In his verses Om is representation of God and with it, he is Sham Sunder (Krishen) and to reach him, recitation of Ram Ram is the must. The important feature of Kashmiri Bhakhti (devotion) is that the wedding of Shiva is as interesting as is the circular dance of Radha and Krishna. From the point view of style, these verses are important as they form a hook of a chain of Lal Vakhs, shiekh Srookye, and Autar Bhat's Killing of Bana Sur, the vakhs of Ropa Bhavani and Parmanad's some Sanskritised weighty Lilas,. Although there are at places Persianised words not only dominant but flavour of Islamic Sofism as well also seems to be present in them.

No. 29. 'Faqr' (alphabet) means that word / F ..Fana. Kaaf 'kabool'/only two meanings.

No. 31 Badakhshan lal naeran (jewel of Badakhshan/Kas nashi kansi nishi, (from whom, from some body)/Lal mul besh baha. (costly jewel)

'Tyooth var mye ditam Divo' These appears to be the sayings of Shiekh (Shiekh Shrooke) but were in vogue in the

name of Mirza Kak or Mirza Kak has also said on the same subjects similar verses. Both have got mixed up that the grain is to be sifted from chaff. For example this four lined verse is straightway of Nunda Reshi.

Padmanpor chi lalley tami galey amrit chow (there is piwa)
Tami shiv voochh thalo thalay tyooth mye var ditam divo
(there is Diva) Lal hailing from Padmanpora, took nectar by
sips, and saw Shiva everywhere. O God grant me such a boon.

But the following appears to be of Kak ji.

Sahar ken sahzanandi Aagar nadi karen sivo

Tas nyay ta kaal gow andi.....

Sahzanand controlled this worldly river from the source and consequently, the troubles of the world and the death bypassed him.

'Tosha ham aki vena poshay'

'You will be happy with a flower,' The four line verses 'woj' explains the intensity of spiritual and mystic experiment in the same way as the other verses of Mirza saheb. For example:

Swa prakash drayi zatsa	sooy choo siryas gash
Nishi panas booz mye basha	nab nayi zaan gash
Khud bkhudooy yaar choo panay	Khas tasoonduy ba daas
Toshi ham aki vena poshay	sona posha sooy

From my light within sprouted a ray which forms the light of the sun. Within me I heard the voice which is the light of the firmament. The great friend (Yaar) incarnate is he Himself and I am his servant. And that God can be happy with a simple flower which is as good as golden flower.

The experience of pure thought and of unmanifested deep spirituality, like keeping the repeating line (Woj) intact in leela

and watsun poetry, this is a queer compatibility in Mirza Kak which requires detailed study. Premi ji has in this connection taken a noble step to collect his writings.

Mathra Devi and Laleshwari

The printed genealogy of saint Mathra Devi in Hindi is a small sized 4x6 inches six page pamphlet which is actually a small essay. Printed not in the book form but like that of a pocket book, it has been rated separately.

Lalashwri's manuscript becomes worth consideration only when it is collected once again and printed after carrying out corrections. Presently it is scattered. It appears that after going through the book of jia Lal Koul, the writer has by dint of his knowledge and information, found out some discrepancies in it and prepared this manuscript. The version of those Lal Vakhs which is based on some other document and is different has been included in it.

Premi ji tells in the foreword that the books written on Lal Ded record different Vakhs. The different chapters of the booklet are as under:

'Why the name of Lala Shwari'. I did not consider it feasible to name it Lal Ded because three additions under this title, printed by the Academy have come out so far.'

'The sequence of Lal Vakhs' I have for sequence of Lal Vakhs of my book, taken the support of this third edition.' Having recorded it Premi ji refers to one of its manuscripts.

'Vaakh Book (pothi)

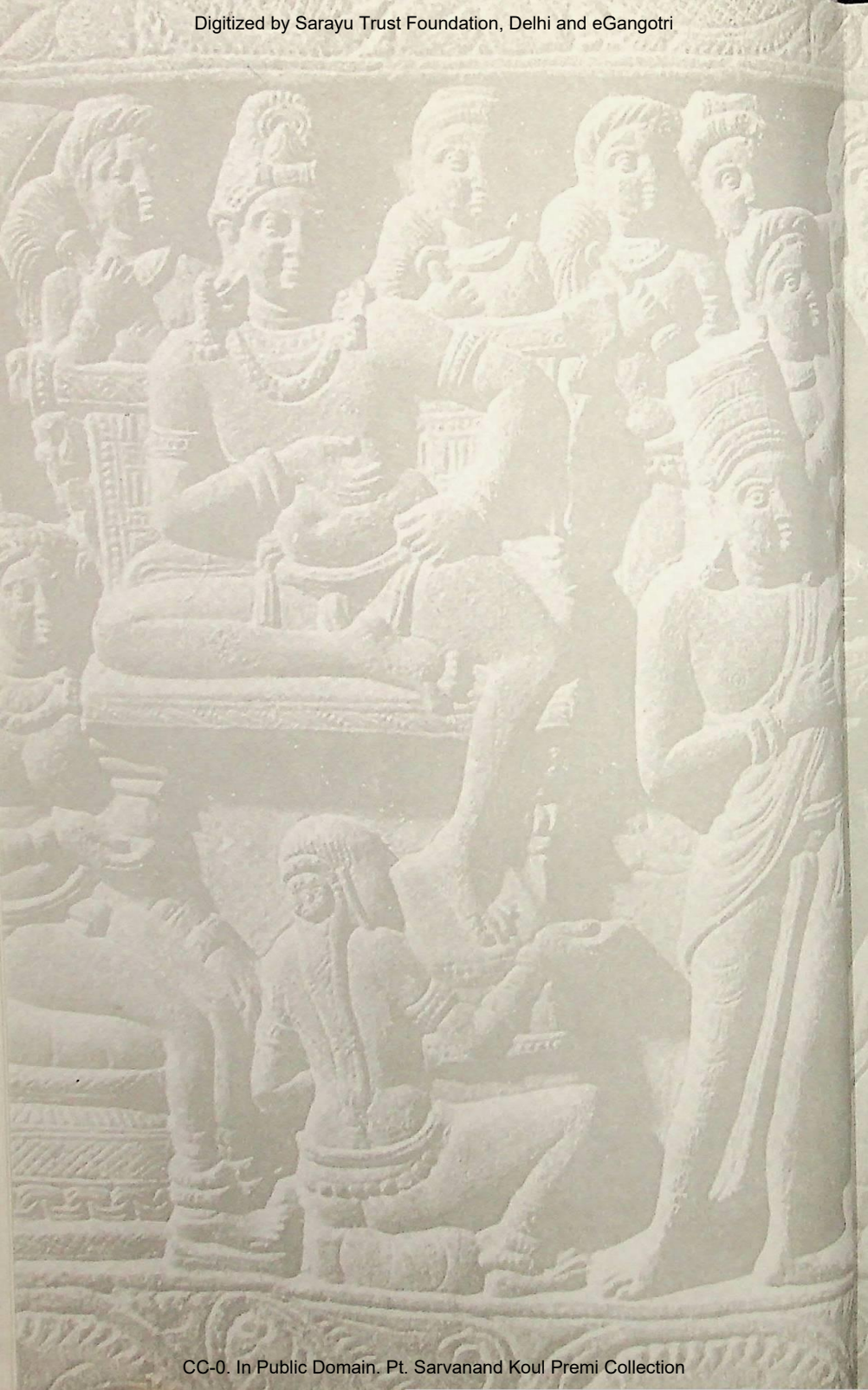
The Vakh Pothi which is available with me contains such Vakhs which are included in this collection. The writing date of this small book 'Pothi' is Chet 1946 which corresponds to about 1889. Premi ji has in it collected Lal Vakhs told by some elder

person, vakhs of Mirza Kak and 'Om naama', besides kalam of Shamas Tabrez and 2-4 Kashmiri and 'Hindi Lilas.' This book (pothi) includes some more essays which are of introductory nature. 'Vakhs of Lala Shwari (Lalleshwari ke Vakh)' 'Lalleshwari and Nud Reshi's writings (Kalam)', 'A few differences (chand ikhtilafat)', 'some incidents related to the life of Lalleshwari', 'the use of words, Om and Guru (the Master)', 'mention about Lalleshwari', 'Great name and pen name of Lalleshwari', 'Vakh attributed to Lalashwari's husband.' Subesquant to this 109 vakhs are given. The number of Vakhs contained in the book 'Pothi' and that contained in in 'Lal Ded' book of vakhs the Akademi have been laid side by side in seriatim with a comparison. It is evident that to whom so ever this manuscript of Prem ji seemed to be worth study and attention, his attempt is initial and study perfunctory.

Perhaps the original manuscript (of an elderly person) is not of standard value because it reveals the trend of old students who for their their own sake study and copy out the popular, whether for reciting orally or having them written down by someone to keep a record of same, to retain it with themselves. However our guess in this regard will remain a guess only till that original manuscript is printed and till this book of Premi ji (manuscript) is also printed after effecting the relevant corrections.

'The stories of Russian Kings' has been printed in 1989. These have been translated from English and the language is simple and flowing for the children. At places the names have been reversed to look like Kashmir names. At places some names have been either added or omitted. However despite these minor changes it is a translation and not an adaptation. In the same strain we can take Premi ji's another manuscript called 'our stories.' This too has been written for children,

however these have been dedicated to the Kashmiri inhabitants of Resh wari of Sati Sar. These stories have, from the view point of subject, been taken from Puranas and narrated in simple language. In total 12 stories have been collected and rewritten.





Sarvanand Koul Premi (1924–1990) was an eminent poet, an intellectual, an educationist, and a warrior of freedom who enriched the Kashmir language and literature with his valuable contribution. He had a deep study and vast knowledge. Even Mehjoor had made this forecast that if the flower like Premi is well watered he will enrich the garden of literature with its fragrance. His 'Nenda karnay nero kashkaro, Nau bahar aav vatna ke yaaro' from well known poem 'Kashkars kun' is still on the tip of the tongue of Kashmiris after a lapse of several decades. With his love songs he gave Kashmir poetry a new style, and with his writings remained continuously trying to attain the object of human values. He spent his whole life in service of the literature. He wrote short stories as well, made translations, and wrote a number of critical essays. His desire of reading and writing remained with him till last. This monograph is an endeavour in respect of a critical appraisal of Premi's service to the cause of knowledge and literature.

Rattan Lal Shant (b. 1938) a well-known short story writer, research scholar, critic, and dramatist. Many of his books have reached the public. He has made out a versified Hindi translation of the poetry of Shiekh-ul-Aalam and Rassul Mir. He was editor of the Tri-Lingual Hindi dictionary as well. Currently, he is editor of literary magazine *Vakh*. He has been awarded Sahitya Akademi award.

Makhan Lal Pandita (b. 1939) is a retired Accounts Officer from J&K Finance Department. After retirement, he turned to writing in Kashmiri. His first book, *Afsana Sumbran* was published in 2000. Since then, he has nine published books to his credit which includes 7 collections of short stories, 1 travelogue and 1 novel. His novel titled, *Saaz Bonen Hund* has been awarded the Best Book Award by J&K Academy of Art, Culture and Languages. His literary articles have appeared in various literary magazines. Currently, he is a member of the Kashmiri Advisory Board of the Sahtiya Akademi.



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